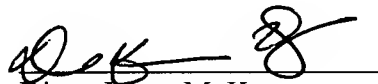


Applicants believe that the claims would have been allowable as originally filed. Accordingly, applicants assert that no claims have been narrowed within the meaning of the Federal Circuit's recent decision in *Festo Corp. v. Shoketsu Kinzoku Kohyo Kabushiki Co.*, No. 95-1066, 2000 WL 1753646 (Fed. Cir. Nov. 29, 2000).

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that all pending claims are in condition for allowance and requests that all claims be allowed. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned should he believe that this would expedite prosecution of this application. It is believed that no fee is required. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-2165.

Respectfully submitted,


Diane Dunn McKay
Reg. No. 34,586
Attorney for Applicant

DATE: September 7, 2001

MATHEWS, COLLINS, SHEPHERD & GOULD
100 Thanet Circle, Suite 306
Princeton, NJ 08540
(609) 924-8555 - Telephone
(609) 924-3036 - Facsimile